

## UTILIZING A WEB-BASED LEARNING MEDIUM IN ELT: HOW STUDENTS PERCEIVED WEBQUEST IN PROMOTING ENGLISH SKILLS

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**ABSTRACT:** The utilization of web-based learning media in English Language Teaching (ELT) has become a popular trend and gained more acceptances among educators and students in recent decades. Webquest is a web-based learning medium used for supporting students in learning and improving their English skills. The aims of this study was to find out whether Webquest can be an alternative learning medium for students to promote the enhancement of their English skills, especially reading and writing through investigating the way students perceived it in teaching and learning process. This study used descriptive method which involved thirty-one of eleventh grade students as the participants. The data were collected by conducting interview and administering questionnaire dealing with five issues; instruction and timing, task, relevance and involvement, collaborative learning, and evaluation. The result revealed that students had favorable perceptions towards the use of Webquest in promoting their reading and writing skills. The students believed that Webquest is an alternative learning medium which facilitate them to attain deeper comprehension and better achievement both in reading and writing.

**Keywords:** *Webquest, learning, perception, reading, writing.*

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## PEMANFAATAN MEDIA PEMBELAJARAN BERBASIS *WEB* DALAM PENGAJARAN BAHASA INGGRIS: CARA SISWA MEMANFAATKAN WEBQUEST GUNA MENINGKATKAN KETRAMPILAN BERBAHASA INGGRIS

**ABSTRAK:** Pemanfaatan media pembelajaran berbasis *web* dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris telah menjadi tren populer dan diakui secara luas oleh pendidik dan siswa dalam beberapa dekade terakhir. *Webquest* adalah media pembelajaran berbasis *web* yang digunakan untuk memfasilitasi siswa dalam belajar dan meningkatkan keterampilan berbahasa Inggrisnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah *Webquest* dapat dijadikan sebagai media pembelajaran pilihan bagi siswa untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbahasa Inggrisnya khususnya membaca dan menulis melalui pengamatan pada persepsi siswa terhadap pemanfaatan media tersebut di dalam proses belajar mengajar. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif dengan melibatkan tiga puluh satu siswa kelas XI sebagai sampel penelitian. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dan kuisioner yang berkaitan dengan lima masalah utama; instruksi dan waktu, tugas, kesesuaian dan keterlibatan, pembelajaran kolaboratif, dan evaluasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa mempunyai persepsi yang baik terhadap pemanfaatan *Webquest* dalam meningkatkan keterampilan membaca dan menulis. Siswa percaya bahwa *Webquest* adalah salah satu media pembelajaran alternatif yang dapat memfasilitasi mereka untuk memperoleh pemahaman yang lebih mendalam dan pencapaian yang lebih baik dalam membaca dan menulis.

**Kata Kunci:** *Webquest, pembelajaran, persepsi, membaca, menulis.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The utilization of web-based learning media in ELT has become a popular trend and gained more acceptances among educators and students in recent decades. Applying the media are believed to support the success of teaching and learning activities due to the benefits that are able to be attained from the implementation the media.

It has been widely known that Webquest emerged as an innovative web-based learning medium in educational sector which provides a platform for effective learning (Amadi & Paul, 2017). The learning medium enables the integration of technology into ELT and potentially contributes to positive results of students learning achievements (Abbi & Ophus, 2008).

Webquest was coined and developed by Bernie Dodge in 1995. According to Dodge (1997, p. 1), "Webquest is an inquiry-oriented activity in which some or all of the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the internet". In addition, Webquests typically consists of six components, namely: introduction, task, process, resources, evaluation, and conclusion.

The introduction serves to launch the topic by providing interesting background information and a blueprint for the whole quest. The task and process sections present a general description of the assigned task and the step-by-step procedure to be followed for completing the task. A set of information sources needed to complete the task is provided in the resources section. The evaluation component is usually in the form of a rubric that will be used to assess students' work, and the conclusion brings the quest to closure, reminds learners of what they have learned and encourages them to extend the experience into other domains (Shan, 2011).

Dudeney (2003) points out that Webquest is a potential educational tool for providing the integration of ICT into ELT, boosting students' motivation, facilitating collaboration in group activities, and encouraging critical thinking. Furthermore, Sen and Neufeld (2006) state that Webquest can increase students' exposure to English language, provide a structured assistance in using internet sites, improve students' critical thinking and provide a medium for cooperative learning. Hence, it can

facilitate students' learning and improve their motivation.

Utilizing Webquest in learning English is totally beneficial to promote the development of students' language skills since it can be integrated to improve four language skills and applied for various levels of topics and difficulties (Wulandari, Sudarwati & Manipuspika, 2017).

Reading and writing are essential language skills which contribute to the students' success in studying and working (Hamra & Syatriana, 2010; & Hadriana, 2017). Having good reading and writing skills enables students to achieve higher achievement in school and career. Therefore, students should be equipped with good comprehension and mastery in those skills.

To facilitate students' success in mastering those two skills is the responsibility of teachers. Since the success of teaching and learning process is influenced by the use of proper learning medium, then it is worthy considered to investigate the students' perceptions towards the implementation of a learning medium. Students' perception towards the utilization of a learning medium will contribute to the

proper use of learning medium and maximum result of learning activity.

This study aims to find out whether Webquest can be an alternative learning medium for students to promote the enhancement of their English skills, especially reading and writing through investigating the way students perceived it in teaching and learning process.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This descriptive study involved thirty one of the eleventh grade students of SMAN 17 Palembang as participants. The participants were male and female students who had similar cultural background and studied English as the first foreign language.

During this study, the teaching and learning activities were conducted in classroom and held for 14 meetings. Each meeting took 45 minutes. The students brought their laptops and used internet facility provided by school.

The teaching material of this study was taken from some English textbooks for the eleventh grade students of Senior High School and other relevant sources from internet. It was presented through Webquest and taught based on teaching-learning objectives that refer to syllabus of curriculum for Senior High

School. There were 7 Webquests which could be accessed by the students. The Webquests provided various materials which related to the text genre.

In learning English by utilizing Webquest as a medium of study, the teaching and learning activities were conducted in two phases. The first phase focused on the reading session and the second phase concerned with writing.

Before starting the learning sessions, the researcher introduced Webquest to the students and explained all of the components of Webquest. After the students know how to use Webquest well, the researcher started the sessions. During the learning sessions, the students learned different topic by using Webquest. Each session was composed of three stages; pre-activities, whilst activities, and post-activities.

In pre-activities, the researcher introduced the topic and task. It included the goal, procedure, time needed, and warm-up activities. Meanwhile, in whilst-activities, the researcher asked the students to work individually or collaboratively to complete the tasks. Here, the reseacher's role was only as a facilitator, organizer, and monitor and provided scaffolding for learning. The students took initiative and responsibility

for their learning and asked for help when they needed it. After the task was completed, the students discussed it together with the researcher. Finally, in post-activities, the researcher summarized the topic and led the students to review targeted knowledge or skills

To collect the data, the researcher conducted interview and distributed questionnaire to the students in the last meeting. The questionnaire comprised 20 statements. It used Likert scale (SA= strongly agree, A= agree, N= neutral, D= disagree, and SD= strongly disagree). Meanwhile, the interview consisted of 5 questions. All of participants (31 students) answered the questionnaire but only 15 students involved in interview.

The questionnaire and interview were designed to find out five main issues related to the use of Webquest in teaching and learning activities, namely: Instruction and timing, task, relevance and involvement, collaborative learning, and evaluation.

In order to establish the whole pictures of the findings and present clear description of the data, the data obtained were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analysis was represented by percentage of the data

gained. Meanwhile, qualitative analysis was clarified by description based on data percentage (Creswell, 2014)

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Questionnaire

The result of the questionnaire indicated that most of students gave positive responses to each category of the questionnaire. In terms of timing and instruction, over 40% of the students agreed that they were effectively introduced to the Webquest and well-informed about Webquest requirement. They found that Webquest had logical and relevant steps that enable them to do the task well and the instruction was useful to guide them in completing the task. However, dealing with sufficient time for finishing the task, 35.5% of the students preferred to stay neutral. In addition, the total percentage in this category showed that 76.4% of the students were in scale of 4 and 5, and 23.7% of the students chose scales lower than 4. It is described in table 1.

**Table 1. Students' Responses on Instruction and Timing**

No	Instruction and Timing	The Percentage of Students' Responses				
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1.	Effective Intro.	0	6.5	6.5	45.2	41.9
2.	Clear Info. and Req.	0	6.5	9.7	48.4	35.5
3.	Logical Order	3.2	6.5	12.9	41.9	35.5

4.	Relevant Step	3.2	3.2	6.5	45.2	41.9
5.	Useful Instruction	3.2	3.2	12.9	41.9	38.7
6.	Sufficient Timing	3.2	9.7	45.2	35.5	6.5
<b>Total Percentage</b>		2.1	5.9	15.7	43.0	33.4

In relation to the tasks, more than 40% of the students agreed that the Webquest task was appropriate to their level. It was able to attract their attention and increase their motivation. In addition, it was easy to use. Therefore, most of the students enjoyed learning reading and writing through Webquest. In their opinions, Webquest was an effective learning medium that could support them in learning reading and writing and help them to deepen their understanding and improve their achievements in reading and writing. Furthermore, the total percentage of this category revealed that 82.3% of the students selected scales 4 and 5, and only 17.8% of the students chose scales 1, 2, and 3. Table 2 presents the data.

**Table 2. Students' Responses on Task**

No	Task	The Percentage of Students' Responses				
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1.	Appropriate Medium	3.2	9.7	9.7	48.4	29.0
2.	Attractive Medium	6.5	6.5	9.7	48.4	29.0
3.	Increasing Motivation	3.2	6.5	9.7	48.4	32.3
4.	Effective Medium	3.2	3.2	9.7	54.8	29.0
5.	Deepening Understanding	3.2	6.5	6.5	48.4	35.5
6.	Improving Achievement	0	3.2	9.7	45.2	41.9
7.	Student Interest	3.2	6.5	9.7	45.2	35.5

8.	Easy and Simple Use	0	3.2	9.7	41.9	45.2
<b>Total Percentage</b>		2.8	5.7	9.3	47.6	34.7

Dealing with collaborative learning, more than 35% of the students showed their agreement and strongly agreement on Webquest which promoted collaborative learning, and the number of the students who chose scale 4 and 5 (80.6%) were bigger than those who selected scale 1, 2, and 3 (19.4%). The students thought that Webquest enabled them to work collaboratively. The collaboration was useful for them as it provides more opportunity not only to support each other but also to share their point of views, knowledge, and interest in learning reading and writing through Webquest. The data is presented in the following table 3.

**Table 3. Students' Responses on Collaborative Learning**

No	Collaborative Learning	The Percentage of Students' Responses				
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1.	Col. Working	6.5	6.5	6.5	45.2	35.5
2.	Useful Cooperation	3.2	6.5	9.7	35.5	45.2
<b>Total Percentage</b>		4.8	6.5	8.1	40.3	40.3

In conjunction with relevance and involvement, even though 38.7% of the students preferred to stay neutral when they were asked about the importance of their involvement in designing Webquest. However, 48.4% of

the students agreed that the material included in the Webquest was relevant to their course. In addition, the students who chose scales 4 and 5 (62.8%) were greater than those who selected scales 1, 2, and 3 (37.1%) as shown in table 4.

**Table 4. Students' Responses on Relevance and Involvement**

No	Relevance and Involvement	The Percentage of Students' Responses				
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1.	Relevant Material	0	9.7	12.9	48.4	29.0
2.	Student Involvement	3.2	9.7	38.7	38.7	9.7
<b>Total Percentage</b>		1.6	9.7	25.8	43.5	19.3

Regarding to the evaluation criteria, it was found that over 45% of the students agreed that the criteria of scoring were suitable to the objective of the given task and the scoring was fair. In addition, 20% of the students preferred to choose scales 1, 2, and 3. Meanwhile, 80% of the students showed their agreement and strongly agreement on the suitable criteria and fair scoring used in Webquest. The data can be seen in table 5 below.

**Table 5. Students' Responses on Evaluation**

No	Evaluation	The Percentage of Students' Responses				
		SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1.	Suitable Criteria	3.2	6.5	9.7	48.4	32.3
2.	Fair Scoring	3.2	6.5	12.9	45.2	32.3
<b>Total Percentage</b>		3.2	6.5	11.3	46.8	32.3

Based on the results of students' responses to each statement of the questionnaire above, it could be figured out that there were 15 students or 48.38% of all respondents were in very good category, 11 students or 35.48% of all respondents were in good category, and 5 students or 16.12% of all respondents were in average category. In addition, none of respondents were in poor and very poor categories. This fact implied that most of the students had very good perceptions towards the use of Webquest in learning reading and writing. It is an effective alternative learning medium that might be used by the students in learning reading and writing. Table 6 displays frequency distribution score category on students' perceptions towards the use of Webquest in learning reading and writing.

**Table 6. Students' Perceptions**

N o	Score Range	Freq uency	Percen tage	Score Class.	Category
1.	85-100	15	48.38	5	Very Good
2.	69-84	11	35.48	4	Good
3.	53-68	5	16.12	3	Average
4.	37-52	0	0	2	Poor
5.	20-36	0	0	1	Very Poor

It could be understood that one of the reasons for this positive result was the task in the Webquest. The students

found that the task in the Webquest was appropriate, interesting and meaningful which could attract their attention, increase their motivation, and improve their comprehension. Therefore, they enjoyed learning reading and writing through Webquest. They believed that Webquest supported them in improving their reading and writing achievement.

The statements inferred that using Webquest in learning reading and writing had given the students useful and fun learning experience which led them to have positive perceptions towards the use of Webquest in learning reading and writing. In other words, it could be stated that the students had favorable perceptions toward the use of Webquest in learning reading and writing because Webquest was an effective web-based learning medium. It facilitated the students' in learning and helped them to improve their English skills.

## Interview

To find out the further details of how students perceived the utilization of Webquest in ELT which focused on reading and writing skills, researcher selected 15 of 31 students randomly to be interviewed. The students answered 5

questions related to the use of Webquest in learning activities.

The result of interview revealed that most of the students (around 90%) expressed their fondness for the use of Webquest. When they were asked whether they enjoyed studying English by making use of Webquest. They responded it positively. One of students said: “In my opinion, studying English through Webquest is fun. Webquest is an interesting and helpful web-based learning medium. It is easy to access and use it. For me, learning English skills especially reading and writing are no longer boring and challenging.”

Many students responded on meaningful and various resources provided in Webquest. A students stated: “There are a lot of relevant and essential resources that can be found in the Webquest. Hence, it is very helpful to improve my knowledge and skills, especially reading and writing. I think that Webquest is one of effective web-based learning media that can be used to support students’ English skills improvement.”

Other students commented on the scaffolding structure provided in the Webquest. One of interesting statements by students was: “When I learn English

through Webquest, I try to understand the materials and do the exercises by following the systematic steps that can be found in Webquest. I can study the materials and do exercises fast sometimes because the instructions are clear.”

The other students talked about collaboration and interaction. The students said: “It is fun to study through Webquest. This learning medium enables me to collaborate with my friends. Sometimes we work in pair, another time in group. So, we are more active in discussion. Thus, we could build good communication and collaboration.”

In line with the result of questionnaire, the interview revealed that the students could perceive Webquest positively. They believed that Webquest was a good learning medium for studying and improving their skills.

## CONCLUSION

On the basis of findings and discussion, it could be concluded that the students’ perceptions towards the use of Webquest in learning reading and writing were favorable. These results of questionnaire and interview proved that Webquest was a web-based learning



medium which could promote teaching reading and writing and improve the students' achievements in reading and writing. In a nutshell, the utilization of a web-based learning medium, Webquest in ELT could be perceived by the students well. Therefore, Webquest is a good learning medium that can be used by the teacher to facilitate teaching and learning activities and support students' language skills improvement.

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